

SPECIAL
POINTS OF
INTEREST:

- 2020
- Giving Thanks
- Into 2021

Remembering

"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"

Philippians 4:13

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Check out the website for previous editions of The Stokey Advent Times on the "Read All About It" web page.

The Stokey Advent Times

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

DECEMBER 2020

2020, What a Year!

Indeed what a year. Imagine, we started a new year and decade with plans of what we could possibly do, how are we going to get others more engaged, how can we be a beacon of light in our community? So many questions and a whole year for it to be answered - or so we thought.

March 2020 came, and along with it something totally out of the ordinary that saw the nation go into complete lockdown, no schools, no shopping, no entertainment, and no church, to name a few no's. Basically, anything that involved people congregating in the same space was shut. Even being with family members was not allowed, unless you lived in the same household. COVID 19 or Coronavirus had taken control of life as we knew it. It was tough!

Now 9 months down the line, it has given us time to adapt to the new way of life that is happening. Some call it the "new norm". It begs the question, will we ever return to how things were before COVID 19 appeared?

The saying is "time is a healer" time to adapt to changes, time to look at doing things in a new way, time to reflect and time to stand still. You know, in everything that happens there is a lesson to be learned. Yes, we can say that COVID 19 has been nothing but problems,

especially when you think about the number of loved ones that have been lost, those who have lost jobs, shielding from family and friends for months on end...and the list goes on, but has it really? Has there been anything that this time has made you do differently? Some have said:

- Personal devotional life has increased and enjoying the new experience of spending more time in the word, being connected to God
- Enjoyed being able to spend more time with the family
- Enjoyed working from home (although some wish they could go back now)
- Developing new cooking skills e.g. bakers!!
- Learning how to use new technology to join in with services
- Getting more exercise

Of note is the fact that church has dramatically changed, as in not being in the actual building, not fellowshiping in person with each other, not having services, but where there is a will, there is a way.

Coming to the forefront in leaps and bounds and quicker than thought possible, online/virtual meetings/services began. In 2020 we are having church online whether through streaming media such as YouTube or church feeds or meeting online via Zoom (the preferred choice!) Has there been a ben-

efit? I would say most definitely, To name a few, we have more people attending mid-week services, departmental meetings and board meetings are taking place with more members in attendance. But for every positive we also have negatives and one of the main negatives is not being able to fellowship on a weekly basis with all members and friends in attendance.

Where do we go from here?

Well, to start, a new year 2021. We do not know what this will bring, but whatever it does, God has, is and always will be in control.

And to encourage you, please see the following texts as a reminder:

Jeremiah 29:11

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Isaiah 41:10

Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Proverbs 19:21

Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.

1 Peter 5:6-7

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Donna Douglas
Head of Comms & Media

Looking Forward - Giving Thanks



End of Year Service

So, this will be our first virtual 'End of Year Service'.

Although not physically in the building, we can still thank God, for all that he has taken us through in the year 2020. Yes, at times it has been difficult, emotional, confusing and very questioning, but in spite of this, we are here to celebrate how good He is towards us.

One thing that will surely be different, is not being able to sing all those songs in one voice that have kept us through the year and brought about good feelings, despite what we may have faced. But there is always a fix for that - I'll tell you more later!

So what can we look forward too:

1. Hearing about what some departments have been doing during this unprecedented time
2. Receiving encouragement through sermonette and the spoken word
3. Being blessed in song by individuals
4. Remembering those who have passed on
5. Testimonies for whoever feels to share, whether in spoken word or song. Now this is where the fix is...if you want a special song as part of your testimony or to be your testimony, send me a mes-

sage by WhatsApp, email, contact through the Stokey website or even carrier pigeon ...and I'll make sure it will be played

6. ...and finally, giving thanks to all for what has been done during 2020

Now you know, come and join us as we all come together for one last time in 2020

When: Thursday 31.12.20

Time: 3.30pm

Zoom details

<https://www.zoom.us/>

ID: 854 7019 2251

Passcode: 198759

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible!

Thanks!!

A big thanks to:

- The pastoral team for having to act in a quick fashion, to think of new ways of doing things, keeping in contact with the members, planning programmes and supporting other departments where necessary
- The Youth leaders for keeping the youth engaged with their own services (even though non-youth members wanted to join on a few occasions but couldn't - it's all good) 😊
- The children's department who have been operating every week and doing different projects to keep the young ones interested and engaged
- The prayer ministries department who have been faithfully keeping all in prayer and continuing with their street witnessing
- The treasury department for taking time to update new ways of church business, tirelessly, but definitely getting there
- The deaconry department, who in spite of church being closed, still on duty to open church whenever required and keeping the church clean both in and out
- The interest co-ordinator

department for thinking of and making sure the older members are not forgotten and included

- Last, but definitely not least, the communications department for keeping the members informed and feeling connected
- Also thanks to everyone who has continued working throughout 2020, even though you may not have been mentioned, all work has been appreciated.

Finally, to you, our Stokey family and friends who have been supporting services where possible, keeping in touch with each other and still making Stokey, Stokey!!!

*"In **EVERYTHING** give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

1 Thessalonians 5:18

And finally... into 2021!

The communications department would just like to wish everyone God's richest blessings for 2021. Let us continued to believe and trust in Him only, as he holds the future.

So I wish to leave you with these few words from the song - I don't know what the future holds

"I don't know, what the future holds

I don't know about today
But I know, who holds my hand
And I know He'll lead the way"

**God is good, all the time
All the time, God is good!**